

Questions about Patient Assistance Programs

Q: What is a Patient Assistance Program?

A: The innovator pharmaceutical industry has a long tradition of providing prescription medicines free of charge to patients who might not otherwise have access to necessary medicines. Generally, a patient assistance program provides prescription medicines to patients who do not have prescription drug coverage or who are underinsured through either private and/or government health plans.

Q: Why were Patient Assistance Programs Created?

A: For many years, the innovator pharmaceutical companies that research and develop new drugs, have been concerned that patients did not have access to the newest and most effective medicines available. Since as early as the 1950s and 1960s, pharmaceutical companies have worked with doctors to identify patients in need who would benefit most from these programs.

Q: How long have PAP Programs been in Place?

A: Patient Assistance Programs are the Pharmaceutical Industry's best-kept secret. Many PAPs have been organized in the past ten years. However, two date back to the 1950s, one was formed in the 60's, two were formed in the 70's, and two started in the 80's. Many drugs have been supported by Patient Assistance Programs for some time. To make it easier for patients and physicians to find information about company-sponsored programs, PhRMA, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, put together a directory of programs in 1992 to provide all company program information in one place.

Q: How do you (Companies) Determine who Qualifies?

A: Each individual company sponsoring a patient assistance program(s) is listed on PhRMA's website, www.helpingpatients.org. Each company determines the eligibility criteria for its program; eligibility criteria and the application processes vary. Basic eligibility criteria generally involve income requirements, family size, and status of insurance coverage for prescription drugs.

Q: How many Patients have been Helped by PAPs?

A: In 2002, approximately 5.4 million patients received prescription medicines through company-sponsored programs. More than 14 million prescriptions were filled through patient assistance programs in 2002.

Q: What is the Price Tag for the Millions of Medications Provided Through PAP?

A: In 2002, the estimated wholesale value of prescription medicines provided through patient assistance programs was \$2.3 billion. More than 14 million prescriptions were filled through patient assistance programs in 2002.

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Q: Where can People find more Information about these Programs?

A: Patients, healthcare professionals and others looking for information about patient assistance programs, should log on to www.helpingpatients.org. This new online resource, developed by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), enables patients to fill out an online form and receive a listing of programs for which they may be qualified.

HelpingPatients.org features information about:

- Programs covering more than 1,400 medicines
- More than 140 industry-sponsored programs
- More than 185 government and private programs

For a printed copy of the directory of patient assistance programs, call 1-800-762-4636.

Q: How are You Helping Providers Navigate Patient Medical Privacy (HIPAA)?

A: *Helpingpatients.org* is designed to allow patients to take control of their own medical records, and to simplify the process for qualifying for free medications as much as possible. Because of the federal regulations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), healthcare providers must maintain a hands-off approach to gathering the information that patients must submit to qualify for these programs.

Q: What else are Pharmaceutical Companies doing to Address this Patient Assistance Need?

A: While patient assistance programs are indispensable for the neediest patients, they cannot be expected to solve the larger national problem of access to medical care, including prescription drugs. The pharmaceutical industry will continue to work cooperatively with those seeking public and private sector solutions to these larger problems. The industry strongly supports expanding access to prescription drugs for seniors as part of Medicare.